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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 121009528-2729-02]

RIN 0648-XD268

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; quota transfer.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the Commonwealth of Virginia is transferring a portion of its 2014 commercial summer flounder quota to the State of New Jersey. NMFS is adjusting the quotas and announcing the revised commercial quota for each state involved.

DATES: Effective [Insert date of filing for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register], through December 31, 2014.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carly Bari, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9224.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are in 50 CFR part 648, and require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state are described in § 648.102.

The final rule implementing Amendment 5 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea

Bass Fishery Management Plan, which was published on December 17, 1993 (58 FR 65936), provided a mechanism for summer flounder quota to be transferred from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine summer flounder commercial quota under § 648.102(c)(2). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria in § 648.102(c)(2)(i) to evaluate requests for quota transfers or combinations.

Virginia has agreed to transfer 2,634 lb (1,195 kg) of its 2014 commercial quota to New Jersey. This transfer was prompted by summer flounder landings of the F/V Golden Nugget, a Virginia vessel that was granted safe harbor in North Carolina due to a vessel fire at sea on March 6, 2014, thereby requiring a quota transfer to account for an increase in New Jersey's landings that would have otherwise accrued against the Virginia quota. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.102(c)(2)(i) have been met. The revised summer flounder commercial quotas for calendar year 2014 are: Virginia, 2,572,766 lb (1,166,987 kg); and New Jersey 1,912,290 lb (867,400 kg).

#### Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.

Dated: May 14, 2014.

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James P. Burgess,  
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.

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